

**Remember Your Blessings**  
**(May 24, 2020 by Rev. Anthony Menzel)**

When you think of the meaning of Memorial Day, it is not a day to be celebrated. It is more of a day to be remembered and honored...

The purpose of Memorial Day is to remember military personnel who died in war...

These soldiers have demonstrated Christ-like love in a special way, not just giving part of their time for others but actually, like Christ, giving up their lives for others...

Scripture: John 15:13

<sup>13</sup> Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.

As we begin our service today, I would like to start off with prayer for the loved ones of those military personnel who have died protecting the United States...

\*\*\*The title of today's message is "Remember Your Blessings."

One of the major ways of overcoming sadness that we talked about last week is to praise God...

And it's a lot easier to praise God when we remember our blessings...

Scripture: Luke 17:22

<sup>22</sup> Then He said to the disciples, "The days will come when you will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man, and you will not see *it*."

Even in the midst of COVID-19, we have to remember how blessed we really are.

Some of us have lost loved ones to COVID-19...

These are hard times...

But at the same time, there is so much to be thankful for...

In the midst of the quarantines, for many of us, there is more time to spend with our families...

Where we used to be rushing around from place to place, now we can slow down and really get to know more at least some of the people we love the most...

Those of us who are working from home and even those whose hours at work have been reduced are getting more rest, and most importantly, we have more time to be with the Lord Jesus because we can spend the time that we used to spend commuting to work praying and resting in many cases...

Scripture: Romans 8:28-39

<sup>28</sup> And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose. <sup>29</sup> For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. <sup>30</sup> Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

God's Everlasting Love

<sup>31</sup> What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *can be* against us? <sup>32</sup> He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? <sup>33</sup> Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? *It is* God who justifies. <sup>34</sup> Who *is* he who condemns? *It is* Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. <sup>35</sup> Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *Shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? <sup>36</sup> As it is written:

"For Your sake we are killed all day long;  
We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."

<sup>37</sup> Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. <sup>38</sup> For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, <sup>39</sup> nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

There is a play called "Our Town" by the famous author Thornton Wilder.

Emily (p.99): Oh, Mama, just look at me one minute as though you really saw me. Mama, fourteen years have gone by. I'm dead. You're a grandmother, Mama. I married George Gibbs, Mama. Wally's dead, too. Mama, his appendix burst on a camping trip to North Conway. We felt just

terrible about it don't you remember? But, just for a moment now we're all together. Mama, just for a moment we're happy. Let's look at one another.

\*\*\*When we feel down, when we want to complain, it is time to cry out to God.

Scripture: Psalm 141:1-4

LORD, I cry out to You;

Make haste to me!

Give ear to my voice when I cry out to You.

<sup>2</sup> Let my prayer be set before You as incense,  
The lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.

<sup>3</sup> Set a guard, O LORD, over my mouth;

Keep watch over the door of my lips.

<sup>4</sup> Do not incline my heart to any evil thing,

To practice wicked works

With men who work iniquity;

And do not let me eat of their delicacies.

Look around at your loved ones...

My dad's friend just passed away...

He was healthy and not that old...

Just collapsed from a heart attack...

I am so thankful that this life is just the beginning of eternity...

Scripture: 2 Corinthians 5:6-8

<sup>6</sup> So *we are* always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. <sup>7</sup> For we walk by faith, not by sight. <sup>8</sup> We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.

However, as I grow closer to the Lord Jesus, I also learn to value more and more each moment I am given of this eternal life...

I think of all the times I shared with people before COVID-19...

All of the family outings, all of the church services...

It makes *Luke 17:22* really hit home to me, too...

I think about how we thank God every year that God the Son came down to earth as the Lord Jesus Christ at Christmastime...

I think about how we thank God during Holy Week for the sacrifice that the Lord Jesus made on the Cross for us and that the Father gave all of us followers of the Lord Jesus eternal life by raising the Lord Jesus from the dead...

I think about how we thank God for giving us another year of life by celebrating birthdays, another year of marriage by celebrating anniversaries...

There are so many things to be thankful for...

God never wants us to stop being thankful for past blessings...

I am thankful for every second I enjoy with my loved ones...

I believe that it pleases the Lord Jesus when we celebrate life and are thankful for past blessings in wholesome ways through the celebration of different traditions...

### Scripture: Exodus 12:1-14

Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, <sup>2</sup> “This month *shall be* your beginning of months; it *shall be* the first month of the year to you. <sup>3</sup> Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: ‘On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of *his* father, a lamb for a household. <sup>4</sup> And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take *it* according to the number of the persons; according to each man’s need you shall make your count for the lamb. <sup>5</sup> Your lamb shall be without<sup>[a]</sup> blemish, a male <sup>[b]</sup> of the first year. You may take *it* from the sheep or from the goats. <sup>6</sup> Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. <sup>7</sup> And they shall take *some* of the blood and put *it* on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it. <sup>8</sup> Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread *and* with bitter *herbs* they shall eat it. <sup>9</sup> Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted in fire—its head with its legs and its entrails. <sup>10</sup> You shall let none of it remain until morning, and what remains of it until morning you shall burn with fire. <sup>11</sup> And thus you shall eat it: <sup>[c]</sup> *with a*

belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. It *is* the LORD's Passover.

<sup>12</sup> 'For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I *am* the LORD. <sup>13</sup> Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you *are*. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy *you* when I strike the land of Egypt.

<sup>14</sup> 'So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance.

\*\*\*So I leave you with a few important passages:

Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

<sup>16</sup> Rejoice always, <sup>17</sup> pray without ceasing, <sup>18</sup> in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

When we feel we can't rejoice, then we should pray...

If we seek the Lord Jesus in intercessory prayer when we're sad and praise Him we're happy, when we always are thankful, then we will build up a strong foundation in our life;

if we are ungrateful or bitter or resentful, then we will tear down the blessings that the Lord Jesus is trying to build in our lives...

Scripture: Proverbs 14:1 The wise woman builds her house,  
But the foolish pulls it down with her hands.

Scripture: Proverbs 18:21

Death and life *are* in the power of the tongue,  
And those who love it will eat its fruit.

Remember not to despair when it seems like a relationship or other blessing is broken beyond repair...

The Lord Jesus is the master at fixing what seems unfixable...

Scripture: Matthew 19:26

<sup>26</sup> But Jesus looked at *them* and said to them, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."